

# QuickAlerts Messages February 2016

## QuickAlerts – February 3, 2016

**Subject:** Modernized e-File Production and Assurance Testing Systems are experiencing an issue

The Modernized e-File Production and Assurance Testing Systems are currently experiencing an issue. The IRS is working to resolve the problem as a top priority. Please refrain from accessing the MeF Systems to transmit submissions, get acknowledgements, retrieve state submissions, send state acknowledgements or submit any other service requests until further notice.

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## QuickAlerts – February 4, 2016

**Subject:** Modernized e-File Production and ATS Systems are Operational

Modernized e-File (MeF) is back online and operational for all service requests.

Please resume sending federal and state submissions, sending state acknowledgements and retrieving federal and state acknowledgements.

We thank you for your patience and apologize for the inconvenience.

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## QuickAlerts – February 11, 2016

**Subject:** ACA Information Returns (AIR) Working Group Meeting on February 23, 2016

The next ACA Information Returns (AIR) Working Group Meeting (webinar) will be held:

Tuesday, February 23, 2016

2:00 - 3:30 p.m. Eastern Time

Dial-in: 1-877-369-5243 Passcode: 0307230# (Enter the access code on your telephone keypad, followed immediately by the # symbol to bypass system prompts)

You may join the teleconference 5 minutes prior to the scheduled start. You must register to attend the webinar. Participants should register for the webinar no later than 10:00 a.m. Eastern Time on the day of the event.

To register for this event, use the following link:

[Webinar Registration](#)

If clicking the above link does not work, please copy the entire link and paste it into your web browser. A confirmation email is sent within 24 hours of registration.

This virtual session will focus on General Affordable Care Act Information Returns (AIR) Program topics. At the conclusion of the presentation, there will be a live question and answer period with IRS presenters.

You may use your computer speakers to listen to the webinar or use the teleconference number provided above. To avoid background noise, please do not use both the computer speakers and the teleconference number.

The presentation for this meeting will be posted to the [AIR Program overview](#) page prior to the meeting. We will send an additional QuickAlerts message when the presentation is posted.

NOTE: The intended audiences of these meetings are Transmitters, Software Developers and Issuers/Payers.

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#### **QuickAlerts – February 17, 2016**

**Subject:** Verify your Electronic Filing Identification Number (EFIN) activity

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) reminds you that you must protect your EFIN, Electronic Transmitter Identification Numbers (ETINs), and passwords from unauthorized use. Furthermore, your EFIN is not transferable, and cannot be shared with others outside your firm or sold. Even if you transfer your business by sale, gift or other disposition, you may not transfer your EFIN.

Take time to review your e-file application to verify the number of returns you have transmitted and to ensure it has not been compromised.

To ensure your EFIN is not compromised, checking your EFIN status page within your e-file application comparing your records to the returns filed, will help you protect your EFIN. To do this, log into your e-file application through [e-services](#) and make sure the summary of the volume and activity of the returns e-filed in the last two years matches your records. If you have any concerns, or if you notice any discrepancies, call the e-help desk at 866-255-0654.

For additional information see “[Tax Professionals Should Perform Periodic Check of EFIN Status](#)” and [frequently asked questions](#) about your EFIN..

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#### **QuickAlerts – February 23, 2016**

**Subject:** Update for the ACA Information Returns (AIR) Working Group Meeting on February 23, 2016

The February 23, 2016, Working Group Meeting (webinar) Presentation Materials have been posted on the [AIR Program Overview](#) page.

The webinar is scheduled to begin at 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time. As a reminder, you must register to attend the webinar. Participants should register for the webinar no later than 10:00 a.m. Eastern Time on the day of the event. To register for this event, use the following link: [Webinar Registration](#)

If clicking the above link does not work, please copy the entire link and paste it into your web browser. A confirmation email will be sent within 24 hours of registration. You may use your computer speakers to listen to the webinar or use the teleconference number provided above. To avoid background noise, please do not use both the computer speakers and the teleconference number.

You may join the associated teleconference 5 minutes prior to the scheduled start. **Dial-in: 1-877-369-5243 Event ID: 0307230#** (Enter the access code on your telephone keypad, followed immediately by the # symbol to bypass system prompts)

This virtual session will focus on General Affordable Care Act Information Returns (AIR) Program topics. At the conclusion of the presentation, there will be a live question and answer period with IRS presenters.

NOTE: The intended audiences of these meetings are Transmitters, Software Developers and Issuers/Payers.

If you have any questions, please send them to the [AIR Mailbox](#).

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#### **QuickAlerts – February 23, 2016**

**Subject:** Filing Season 2016 guidance for ACA Information Returns (1094/5 B&C) Schema and Business Rule optional elements

The IRS reminds Software Developers and Issuers that the schema should not be used as the sole technical document in the development of software to determine what information should be captured and submitted to the IRS. Form instructions and the provided business rules that are part of the published schema package should be used when developing your software. These technical specifications along with Publications 5164/5165 and the AIR Submission Composition and Reference Guide constitute the artifacts that should guide your software development. This will ensure software captures and submits the required data.

The majority of schema data elements for ACA Information Returns (Forms 1094/5 B&C) were defined as “optional”; yet they may not be optional in all filing situations. For example, when completing an authoritative transmittal (Form 1094-C), most data elements in Parts I through IV must be completed. When submitting a non-authoritative transmittal, only Part I is required. In this example, while the schema indicates all of these fields are optional, business rules enforce required data in Parts I through IV when submitting the authoritative transmittal.

Initial filings indicate required data is frequently omitted from the XML which results in the inability to enforce the business rules and identify missing data as an error. The XML tag for any field that is included in a business rule must be included within the body of the XML transmission. Publication 5165 is being updated to include specific guidance on the need to include the XML tag for any field that is included in a business rule within the body of the XML transmission.

The Information Return civil penalty legislation requires that submissions be both timely and correct. When all required fields are included and error conditions are met, an error message will be generated identifying information that must be corrected to be compliant. Software must perform the same consistency checks indicated within business rule specifications to ensure that customers meet the criteria for filing timely and correct which otherwise could result in IRS assessing penalties for incomplete data. There are some situations where required data may not be available to be included in the submission. IRS provides penalty abatement where a good faith attempt to submit the data has been demonstrated.

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#### **QuickAlerts – February 26, 2016**

**Subject:** Extended Maintenance Window for the MeF Production and ATS Environments

The MeF scheduled maintenance build window is being extended on Sunday, February 28, 2016. The system will be unavailable from 1:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m., Eastern.

The build will deploy critical system updates. This extended window affects the MeF Production and ATS Environments.

Thank you in advance for refraining from accessing the MeF Production and ATS Systems during this period.

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### **QuickAlerts – February 26, 2016**

**Subject:** Extended Maintenance Window for the AIR Production and AATS Environments

The AIR scheduled maintenance build window is being extended on Sunday, February 28, 2016. The system will be unavailable from 1:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m., Eastern.

The build will deploy critical system updates. This extended window affects the Production and AATS environments.

Thank you in advance for refraining from accessing the Production and AATS systems during this period.

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